

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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The following is a brief summary of the situation in five East German iron and steel works, and a transport engineering plant, at the end of June 1953. It shows the extent to which production was interrupted by the strikes which occurred throughout East Germany in the middle of the month, and, where these took place, the damage caused to plant installations by sabotage.

1. Maximilianshuetten, Unterwellenborn

No strike took place and production proceeded normally. Attempts by a few individuals to start a general plant strike met with no response, and no intervention by the People's Police or Soviet troops proved necessary. This was largely because production norms were lowered to a reasonable level in March, without any corresponding amendments being made to the wage scale. Relations between workers and management are generally good, and the work of the plant is not normally interfered with to any great extent by Soviet officials.

2. EKO, Fuerstenberg

- a. Production was normal throughout the strike period. Although workmen living in the Beeskow-Storkow, Fuerstenwalde, and Spree areas failed to appear for several days, the remaining workers agreed to work a twelve-hour day and were provided with temporary accommodations in a nearby workers' housing unit. Frequent searches for arms and sabotage equipment were carried out for several days, but only one arrest was made. Here, too, production norms were reduced in March and labor relations are good.
- b. Blast furnaces I - IV worked normally throughout the period and total output for June was approximately 45,000 tons.

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3. Edelstahlwerk Doehlen

Work stopped entirely for three days and several demonstrations took place. The plant was undamaged, however.

4. RAW Kirchmoeser

The strike lasted from 17 to 24 June, during which period considerable damage was caused to rolling stock awaiting repair. All nonferrous metal parts were removed from about 80 freight cars and some 15 locomotives which, because of the shortage of these metals in East Germany, are expected to be out of action for an indefinite period.

5. Stahlwerk Brandenburg/Havel

Five of the open hearth furnaces at this plant were severely damaged by saboteurs and are expected by the management to be out of action for at least two months. The sixth open hearth furnace, which was not due to be fired until the beginning of July, was undamaged. The daily capacity of these furnaces is 100 tons, but for safety reasons output is normally restricted to about 80 tons per day.

6. Stahlwerk Groeditz

- a. A total stoppage lasting for five days occurred here. Three of the open hearth furnaces were shut down and allowed to cool, with the result that the furnace linings fell in. All the annealing furnaces were damaged in the same way.
- b. The rolling mill which produces wheel rims for railway locomotives and rolling stock was severely damaged during the strike. Although it proved possible to restart the mill towards the end of the month, all wheel rims produced there after the strike will have to be rejected and remelted as scrap.
- c. There has been no effective production in the plant since the strike. The entire plant was inspected at the end of the month by officials of the central design office of the metallurgical industry in Berlin, who stated that most sections of the plant, and especially the rolling mill, would have to be completely reconstructed before normal production could begin again. The necessary drawings are now being prepared in Berlin and permission to proceed with repairs is awaited from the Ministry of Mining and Smelting.

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